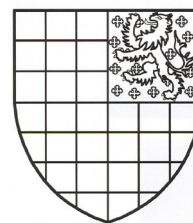


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**LEWES
TOWN
COUNCIL**

MINUTES

of the meeting of the **Commemorations & events Committee**, held on **Thursday 12th August 2021** online via Zoom Meetings at **3:00pm**.

PRESENT Cllrs S Catlin; G Earl; Dr W Maples; Dr G Mayhew(*Chairman*); J Vernon

In attendance: S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*); F Garth (*Asst TC & Civic Officer*),

Observing: Ms Laura Chrysostomou (*TC Designate*)

Commems2021/01 ELECTION of CHAIR: Cllr Dr Mayhew was elected as Chair of the Committee for the 2021/22 year.

Commems2021/02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Apologies had been received from Cllr Makepeace, who was attending a family picnic; Cllr O'Keeffe, and Cllr Milner who were on holiday, and Cllr Wood who was unwell.

Commems2021/03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:
There were none

Commems2021/04 QUESTIONS: There were none

Commems2021/05 MINUTES:

It was resolved that:

Commems2021/05.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 8th September 2020 are received and agreed as an accurate record.

Commems2021/06 REMIT of the COMMITTEE:

The remit of the committee was rehearsed:

- > Originally a Working Party set up in 2012 to address a number of imminent commemorations; this body had its mandate extended in response to the similar considerations arising through to 2019; when it was established as a standing committee to address the continuing volume of noteworthy commemorations foreseeable in the next few years.
- > The Commemorations & Events Committee is mandated to consider significant anniversaries/centenaries or similar occasions, and such notable events as may be presented, and to formulate recommendations for Council as to the appropriate recognition of them.

Commems2021/07 LEWES CLIMATE FESTIVAL:

An update was given on the planning of this event, which was supported by the Council. The plans were progressing well, and a successful event was anticipated, weather permitting, including musicians; presentations; performances and science experiments. There were some minor problems, such as the need to find an alternative provider for a cake stall. A poster had been produced, and copies would be provided to the Town Hall. An electronic version was also requested

Commems2021/08 LEWES ARTS COUNCIL:

It was reported that Lewes District Council (LDC) was believed to be about to announce a revised focus on Tourism & Culture. It was agreed that the most appropriate way to progress aspirations for a Lewes Arts Council might be to await developments in this regard and to offer LDC assistance, such as facilitating a Lewes sub-group.

QUEENS PLATINUM JUBILEE 2022:

a) *Celebratory event:* Preliminary discussions had been held with representatives of Lewes's bonfire Societies who were planning a weekend event in June 2022 involving local area street parties followed by processions through the town culminating in a display, possibly from the Martyrs' Memorial, and sought support and funding from the Town Council. This would be the finale to a day-long public event probably on Malling Recreation Ground. The cost of fireworks for a suitable display was of the order of £15,000 and this was generally considered to be the lowest cost of a traditional Lewes display. The Committee agreed to recommend this level of support to Council, to be included when 2022/23 budgets are set. It was noted that there should be a requirement for an environmental impact assessment. It was suggested that the Mayor might host a "seniors tea" on the day, as had been popular for similar events in the recent past, and perhaps a schools art competition with a display of the work in the Town Hall similar to that held for the Queen's diamond Jubilee.

b) *"Queen's Green Canopy" initiative:* this was a national project although there was some confusion as to whether the intention was to plant single or multiple trees. It was acknowledged that multiple trees had a greater chance of survival, and it was suggested that a pair of Pomegranate trees might be planted in the Peace Garden. An alternative might be a Mulberry to complement the existing tree in Southover Grange Gardens planted in 1951 by the then Princess Elizabeth. Mrs Garth would investigate the costs and practicalities of these ideas.

LEWES WAR MEMORIAL CENTENARY 2022:

a) *"Roll of Honour" Book:* The town's Grade 2* heritage-listed war memorial would reach its centenary in September 2022, and Council had earlier agreed the principle of a book to be published by the Council to coincide with this, to commemorate all those who lost their lives. This followed research commissioned from Cllr Dr Mayhew into those recorded, and those omitted from, the memorial which had commenced with the start of the national period of commemoration of WW1 between 2014 and 2018, and now represented an impressive body of work comprising biographies of 389 individuals in total. It had become apparent at the outset that the names recorded included several individuals with tenuous or no actual links to Lewes due to the method of applications for inclusion that had applied following the end of the war, whereas many Lewes people were not recorded there. Material from the project had been displayed in the Town Hall in 2018 to much popular acclaim. Cllr Dr Mayhew had conducted extensive research in the 7 years since then and had also prepared a comprehensive introduction explaining the socio-political background to the period. Maps and photographs were still required to finish the work, and incidental issues to resolve such as Ordnance Survey permission for reproduction, but over 181,000 words had been written. It was estimated that a sum of £10 – 12,000 might be needed to produce a volume of suitable quality, but accurate details of costs would need to be established. Conventional production timescales for such projects suggested that to publish the finished book by September 2022, work should start without delay. Colleagues wished to record their thanks to Dr Mayhew for his work on this project, and agreed to recommend to Council that a sum of £12,000 be reserved pending establishment of costs for production of a suitable book (attributing authorship and research credits to him), and that the Commemorations Committee be authorized to complete the project.

b) The war memorial was upgraded by English Heritage to 2-star status in 2014. The principal reasons given included:

Historic interest: as an eloquent witness to the tragic impacts of world events on this community, and the sacrifices it made in the conflicts of the C20;

Sculptural interest: by Vernon March, a sculptor of considerable renown notable for the vigour of his figures, whose premature death makes his war memorials his main legacy. That in Lewes is the finest of his memorials in England. The tight composition and verticality of its design are particularly well suited to its constricted site.

A rededication ceremony was proposed, in 2022, and this might be combined with the Queen's jubilee celebrations with invitation being extended to the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment and regimental band, who might also be prevailed upon to play at the evening public event. It was agreed that this idea should be recommended to Council.

Commems2021/11 BLACK HISTORY MONTH:

It was suggested that for 2021 the Council should again purchase some BHM Society education packs (cost approximately £50 each) and offer these to interested local schools. Cllr Dr Baah and Mrs Garth had been invited to meetings at the Depot with a group, Diversity Resource International, who were planning events for BHM across three nights in October 2021. It was proposed that a closing event be hosted by the Mayor in the Town Hall on 23rd October and there would be events at All Saints Centre and the town library.

Commems2021/12 TOM PAINE DAY:

This item was deferred in the absence of Cllr Milner, who had promoted it.

Commems2021/13 PELL'S HISTORIC INTERPRETATION BOARDS:

The Pells Local History Group had prepared the basis of some attractive historic interpretation material as part of their aborted (due to Covid-19) commemoration plans for the area. These could be designed in similar graphic format to the existing 'lectern' style boards advising on wildfowl feeding at a cost of around £1,000. The Group had initially approached the Council in 2019 to partner in this project, with two boards proposed – one at each end of the lake detailing different historic contexts - but it had subsequently been affected by Covid-19. It was proposed that production of two boards be supported

Commems2021/14 PUBLIC ART:

A project was proposed to sponsor a 'waste artwork' that commemorates Mary Ann Woodhouse and Gideon Mantell, as well as to recognise the connection between fossil fuels and plastics. The artwork would be an Iguanodon, that litter pickers can fill with plastic bottles and bottle tops. There is a similar idea here seen at Betwys-y-Coed in Wales:

<https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/383509724517837029/>

There were residents who had for many years been interested in creating a Mantell/Woodward commemoration, and would probably be happy to be involved, as might Litter Free Lewes/Climate Hub and possibly the Sussex Archeological society. The Council could commission the work, with a specification that includes the outline above, but with input from the Mantell enthusiasts, Litter Free Lewes, Climate Hub and, of course, the commissioned artist(s). If young people could be involved in some way, this would be ideal: perhaps conducting the initial litter picks or, if the commissioned artist wanted to work with them.

Costs were unknown, but it was an attractive project that the Committee agreed should be pursued and Council would be asked to support further research into costs *etc.*

Commems2021/15 GENERAL DISCUSSION:

It was proposed that the Council should purchase a Sussex Flag to be flown on Sussex Day each year (16th June – St Richard's Day). Mrs Garth was currently updating the Council's flag calendar – following the protocol approved by the

Government Department of Media Culture & Sport. Sussex day had been recognized since 2013, and a flag could be purchased for approximately £100. The idea of a “tourist-cam” webcam installation was agreed as an interesting suggestion that could be investigated as a future project.

Commems2021/16

CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS:

It was agreed to recommend to Council that:

- › A sum of £15,000 be included in budgets for 2022/23 as support for the Lewes bonfire Societies’ joint project for a Queen’s Jubilee firework display, as described at Minute 09 a) above.
- › A sum of £12,000 be agreed pending establishment of costs for production of a suitable “Roll of Honour” book, and that the Commemorations Committee be authorized to complete the project, as described at Minute 10 a) above.
- › A rededication ceremony should be planned for the town’s War memorial.
- › Support be given to the Black History Month events planned, as described at Minute 11 above.
- › Support be given to produce two historic interpretation bards at the Pells, as described at Minute 13 above.
- › In-principle agreement be given to develop a public “waste artwork” project as described at Minute 14 above.
- › The Council should purchase a Sussex Flag to be flown on Sussex Day each year (16th June – St Richard’s Day) (cost approximately £100).

Commems2021/17

There being no other business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed, and thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions.

The meeting closed at 4:45pm

Signed.....

Date